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WEEKEND SATURDAY ARGUS

Jg..... Nr..... P. 22 Dat. 22. 3. 1997

Hillary and her fearful bodyguards!

And don't forget Di...

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Johannesburg - There were no warnings, briefings or official schedules. Princess Diana came, saw and created pandemonium without so much as a royal wave. South African and overseas paparazzi speculated and debated about where she was. All she had to do to start a panic was be there.

Some leading ladies do, however, have to work a little harder at creating the right image for their arrival and roadshow.

"Come out and meet Hillary Clinton!" - shouted organisers with loudhailers - "Come and meet the First Lady!"

Confused Soweto residents came out of their homes. "Hillary who?" they asked, wondering why so many police officers had taken up vantage points outside a cemetery.

The visits this week of Diana and Hillary Clinton certainly proved one thing: it's not about what you do, but rather the perceptions you create - and the show that helps you create them.

*Some may call it
a farce, but I
prefer to think of
it as a political
cabaret*

TREFWOORDE

1 vergelyk

2 verskille

3 Prinses

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afrika

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INSTITUUT VIR EIETDSE GESKIEDENIS

Die Universiteit van die Oranje-Vrystaat



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12 2. 3. 1997

WEEKEND

SATURDAY ARGUS

Jg..... Nr..... P...22... Dat...12.3.1997

Some may call it a farce, but I prefer to think of it as a political cabaret, *The Dance of the Democrats*.

Police dogs sniffed bags, Secret Service agents patted us down and a few photographers actually tried to reason with them. Wasted breath, I'm afraid.

Fear and loathing best describe them. And being very, very big, with funny things in their ears and significant bulges in their clothing.

They epitomise all that is healthy and toxin free, and are politically correct in the extreme. They have African-Americans, whites, Hispanics – even a native American for good measure.

Wherever they go, one thing remains a constant – they spend all their time mumbling conspiratorially into their sleeves.

Microphones appear like growths from the back of their necks and they always seem to have something to tell someone.

The *Hillary and Chelsea Roadshow* was impressive, managing to attract the crowds, cordon off the roads and infuriate the locals.

Even Gauteng Premier Tokyo Sexwale looked as though his feathers had been a little ruffled by the strong-arm tactics of the Secret Service.

One can only imagine what matters of national importance kept those agents chatting down their jacket sleeves all day.

Perhaps they were speculating whether Hillary's neon-pink suit made her an easier target for sharpshooters. Or perhaps it was less cerebrally inclined and they were simply debating the relative merits of a Castle and a Budweiser.

Despite Mrs Clinton's attempts to delve into the meaty subjects of education and the struggle for democracy, many guests seemed more interested with the wonderful success achieved by Chelsea's orthodontist, and Mrs Clinton's use of an alic band.

The public and media do, however, seem to be fascinated with the banal routines of the rich and famous. All over the world people are fascinated by the day-to-day habits of Socks, the presidential cat, and Chelsea's move into her freshman year of college.

Internationally, the well-informed have a working knowledge of Princess Diana's colonic

irrigation techniques, the name of her gym trainer and her extraordinary abilities on the "thigh master".

The fact that Mrs Clinton's suite in Rosebank cost R5 000 a night was a fascinating snippet and the added tit-bit that her 45-member delegation were with her was even juicier.

The real scoop, however, was Princess Diana. Where was she? Where was she shopping? With whom was she lunching?

In one week South Africans have been rubbing shoulders with a Princess as well as a First Lady – and a Grammy winner at that. The resultant euphoric feeding frenzy left photographers, writers and gossip-mongers gasping.

It is, however, all about the show, the spectacle and the power of the package.

Hillary relied on flashy suits, loudhailers and intimidating bodyguards. Princess Diana has only to rely on the history of British royalty to secure her immortal place in the limelight. Not even *The Bold and the Beautiful* or *Days of Our Lives* can supply the constant flow of marital disputes, illicit frolics, eating disorders and temper tantrums that British royalty can.

TREFWOORDE

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